

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Reps. George Miller (D-CA) and Rush Holt (D-NJ) issued the following statement today on a new report that shows that while American students are making some strides in math achievement, students in other countries still outrank U.S. students in overall math and science performance. The study, the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), compares achievement among 4th and 8th grade students in math and science. The lawmakers said the report was the latest proof that the U.S. must re-double its commitment to improving math and science education, in part by drawing effective, qualified teachers to these subject areas.

“While it is good news that fourth graders have made significant gains in math, it’s troubling that our students are still behind their international peers in both math and science – fields that are key to our country’s economic vitality and competitiveness” said Miller, the chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee. “It’s increasingly clear that building a world-class education system that provides students with a strong foundation in math and science must be part of any meaningful long-term economic recovery strategy.”

“How many red flags, how many alarms, how many reports will it take to understand that we significantly need to strengthen math and science education? Without math and science training, we cannot meet society’s needs and compete in a global marketplace. This has been urgent for a long time, but we keep behaving like it doesn’t matter” said Holt, a scientist and member of the House Education and Labor Committee, who has been a long time advocate for stronger science, technology, engineering, and math education.

According to the study, while both fourth and eighth grade students showed improvements in math, neither grade level improved in science over the past decade. The report also found that overall fourth and eighth graders in the U.S. performed above average in math and science, and that the lowest-performing fourth graders showed improvement in math between 1995 and 2007 and between 2003 and 2007.

Last summer, Congress enacted the America COMPETES Act which provides education and job training for students and workers in math, science, technology, and engineering fields. The law builds upon principles unveiled by Chairman Miller and Democratic leaders in their Innovation Agenda in November 2005. For more information about the COMPETES Act, click [here](#).

Last year, as part of the landmark College Cost Reduction and Access Act, Congress enacted TEACH grants, which provide up-front tuition assistance of \$4,000 each year – for a maximum of \$16,000 – to students who commit to teaching in public schools in high-poverty communities or high-need subject areas, such as math and science. For more information about the law, click [here](#).

